

20 November 2019

Chief of Staff to the Minister of Veterans Affairs
66 Slater Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0P4

Dear Chief of Staff to the Minister of Veterans Affairs,

Welcome to Veterans Affairs Canada. We hope that you and your team enjoy working on this challenging and rewarding portfolio.

Housed within the Strategic Oversight and Communications Branch, the Corporate Secretariat prides itself on being a trusted source for responsive, competent and reliable support. Supporting the Minister and staff is at the core of what we do, and we work tirelessly to ensure the highest level of service.

Under the leadership of Director General Lorri Biesenthal, the Corporate Secretariat's three teams (the Cabinet and Parliamentary Affairs and Governance unit, the Executive Services Unit and the Departmental Assistant's Office) are responsible for providing support in a wide range of areas.

The Cabinet and Parliamentary Affairs and Governance team provides strategic advice and operational services to the Minister and staff in support of cabinet and parliamentary responsibilities, such as the development of Question Period materials and the monitoring of parliamentary committees. This team is also responsible for coordinating all briefings of the Minister and staff by departmental officials. You will become very familiar with our specialized Briefing, Coordination and Liaison Unit, affectionately known as BCL.

The Executive Services Unit is responsible for responding to inquiries, in writing and by phone, from Veterans and their families, parliamentarians, Veterans organizations and the general public. The team prepares correspondence for the Minister's signature and acts as the departmental focal point for document tracking. We have members of the Executive Services Unit in both Ottawa and Charlottetown.

The Departmental Assistant's Office provides integrated support to the Minister and staff to ensure seamless coordination between the Department and the Minister's Office. The Departmental Assistant's Office tasks branches, helps resolve IT and administrative issues, and takes care of domestic ministerial travel and protocol arrangements, as required.

The Corporate Secretariat overall offers the Minister and staff a comprehensive suite of supports and services aimed at enabling the provision of exemplary programs and benefits to our Veterans and other clients that honour their sacrifices and achievements.

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We look forward to collaborating with you and your team. We know much work lies ahead in the coming days, weeks, months and years—How can we help?

Respectfully,

Charlotte Bastien
Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Oversight and Communications

Lorri Biesenthal
Director General, Corporate Secretariat